

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The applicant's amendments filed 2/23/2008, relating to the Specification, Figure 18 and the claims, are entered. Claims 1, 8, 17 and 24 are amended. Claims 14-16 were previously cancelled. Claims 1-13 and 17-28 are pending for examination.

Drawings

2. Figures 1-17 filed 2/11/2004 and Figure 18 filed 2/13/2008 are approved.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments, see pages 16-18, filed 2/13/2008, with respect to claims 1, 8, 17 and 24 have been fully considered and are persuasive. In order to place the application in condition for allowance the following Examiner's Amendment is being issued

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

4. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with attorney Mr. Ernest J. Beffel on 3/20/2008.

Note: The amendment of claims 1, 8, 17 and 24 was discussed and agreed in the said telephone interview. As regards claim 27 it stated its dependency on claim 15, a cancelled claim, and therefore it also has been amended as being dependent on claim 17.

The application has been amended as follows:

Specification

[0002] This application is related to the commonly owned U.S. Patent Application No. 10/776,079, Atty Docket 1007-1, entitled "Negotiation and Fulfillment of Insurance Conditions and Release of Goods for Export" by inventors Graham R.F. Napier, Steve M. Viarengo and Manoj Narayan, filed on the same day as the present application, and owned by the same assignee now and at the time of the invention. That co-pending application is incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein. In addition, this application is related to and incorporates by reference the co-pending U.S. Application No. 10/228,158, filed August 26, 2002, entitled "SYSTEMS AND METHODS TO SUPPORT IMPORT-EXPORT TRANSACTIONS", and U.S. Application No. 10/287,447, filed November 4, 2002, entitled "SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR PRODUCING DOCUMENTARY CREDIT AND CONFORMING SHIPPING DOCUMENTS".

Claims

1. (Currently amended) A computer-aided method of collaborating on the terms and conditions of shipment and sale, the creation of documents and the tracking of an international shipment of goods and approving payment from a credit facility or demand

Art Unit: 3625

deposit account, the collaboration including an exporter, an importer and an importer's bank, the method including:

setting authorizations for international shipment participants to enter, view and approve aspects of data that

record conditions and instructions for payment from the importer to the exporter,

track progress of the international shipment participants toward meeting the conditions for payment, and

allow the importer to electronically approve payment to the exporter by the importer's bank from the credit facility or demand deposit account;

receiving and recording agreed conditions and instructions for payment;

mapping fields of documents needed to evidence fulfillment to the data recording the conditions and instructions for payment and establishing synchronization rules for propagation of data among and editing of the mapped fields;

applying the synchronization rules to propagate the data to the documents needed to evidence fulfillment using the mapping, wherein the synchronization rules ~~depend on document preparation states of the agreed conditions and instructions for payment and the synchronization rules control a user's~~ restrict users' ability to override the propagated data fields once a document preparation state for the agreed conditions and instructions reaches a predetermined level;

receiving documentation from the exporter or exporter's agent corresponding to fulfillment of the agreed conditions for payment, without need for bank evaluation of the documentation;

electronically initiating an approval to pay following evaluation by the importer or the importer's agent that the conditions for payment have been fulfilled, modified or waived, the approval to pay corresponding to the instructions for payment; and receiving a status update confirming payment of the exporter.

8. (Currently amended) A computer-aided method of collaborating on the terms and conditions of shipment and sale, the creation of documents and the tracking of an international shipment of goods and authorizing payment from a credit facility or demand deposit account, the collaboration including an exporter, an importer and an importer's bank, the method including:

- setting authorizations for international shipment participants to view and edit aspects of data that

 - records conditions and instructions for payment from the importer to the exporter,

 - tracks progress of the international shipment participants toward meeting the conditions for payment, and

 - allows the importer to electronically approve payment of the exporter by the importer's bank from the credit facility or demand deposit account;

- receiving and recording agreed conditions and instructions for payment;

- mapping fields of documents needed to evidence fulfillment to the data recording the conditions and instructions for payment and establishing synchronization rules for propagation of data among and editing of the mapped fields;

- applying the synchronization rules to propagate the data to the documents needed to evidence fulfillment using the mapping, wherein the synchronization rules ~~depend on document preparation states of the agreed conditions and instructions for payment and the synchronization rules control a user's~~ restrict users' ability to override the propagated data fields once a document preparation state for the agreed conditions and instructions reaches a predetermined level;

- generating or uploading documentation corresponding to fulfillment of the conditions for payment, without need for bank evaluation of the documentation;

Art Unit: 3625

receiving notification that the importer's bank has been approved to pay the exporter, following evaluation by the importer or the importer's agent that the conditions for payment have been fulfilled, modified or waived, the approval to pay corresponding to the instructions for payment; and
receiving a status update confirming transmittal of payment.

17. (Currently amended) A computer-aided method of collaborating on the terms and conditions of shipment and sale, the creation of documents and the tracking of an international shipment of goods and approving payment from a credit facility or demand deposit account, the collaboration including an exporter, and importer and an importer's bank, the method including:

setting authorizations for international shipment participants to view and edit aspects of data that

records conditions and instructions for payment from the importer to the exporter,

tracks progress of the international shipment participants toward meeting the conditions for payment, and

allows the importer to electronically initiate payment of the exporter by the importer's bank from the credit facility or demand deposit account;

receiving and storing agreed conditions and instructions for payment;

mapping fields of documents needed to evidence fulfillment to the ~~stored~~ data
recording the conditions and instructions for payment and establishing
synchronization rules for propagation of data among and editing of the mapped
fields;

applying the synchronization rules to propagate the data to the documents needed
to evidence fulfillment using the mapping, wherein the synchronization rules ~~depend~~

~~on document preparation states of the agreed conditions and instructions for payment and the synchronization rules control a user's~~ restrict users' ability to override the propagated data fields once a document preparation state for the agreed conditions and instructions reaches a predetermined level;

storing and transmitting documentation corresponding to fulfillment of the agreed conditions for payment, without need for bank evaluation of the documentation;

processing an electronically initiated approval to pay, following evaluation by the importer or the importer's agent that the conditions for payment have been fulfilled, modified or waived, the approval to pay corresponding to the stored agreed conditions and instructions for payment; and

processing and exposing for view a status update confirming payment to the exporter.

24. (Currently amended) A computer-aided system that facilitates collaborative tracking of an international shipment of goods and approval of payment from credit facility, the collaborators including an exporter, and importer and importer's bank, the system including a computer system, including storage, resources and logic accessible by international shipment participants, the logic adapted to:

set authorizations for the international shipment participants to view and had aspects of data that

record conditions and instructions for payment from the importer to the exporter,

track progress of the international shipment participants toward meeting the conditions for payment, and

allow the importer to electronically approve payment of the exporter by the importer's bank from the credit facility;

receive and store agreed conditions and instructions for payment;

Art Unit: 3625

map fields of documents needed to evidence fulfillment to the ~~stored~~ data recording the conditions and instructions for payment and establishing synchronization rules for propagation of data among and editing of the mapped fields;

apply the synchronization rules to propagate the data to the documents needed to evidence fulfillment using the mapping, wherein the synchronization rules ~~depend on document preparation states of the agreed conditions and instructions for payment and the synchronization rules control a user's~~ restrict users' ability to override the propagated data fields once a document preparation state for the agreed conditions and instructions reaches a predetermined level;

store and transmit documentation corresponding to fulfillment of the agreed conditions for payment, without need for bank evaluation of the documentation;

process an electronically initiated approval to pay, following evaluation by the importer or the importer's agent that the conditions for payment have been fulfilled, modified or waived, the approval to pay corresponding to the stored agreed conditions and instructions for payment; and

process and expose to view a status update confirming payment of the exporter.

27. (Previously presented) The method of claim 45, 17 wherein the conditions and instructions for payment are selected from a plurality of INCO terms and specifying the conditions and instructions for payment includes choosing from a list of INCO terms.

5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claims 1-13 and 17-28 are allowed. Claims 1, 8, 17 and 24 are independent claims.

The applicant's arguments, filed 2/13/2008, see pages 16-18, are persuasive and the

Art Unit: 3625

prior art of Tozzoli (US Patent 5,717,989) does not anticipate nor, either alone or combined, render obvious the limitations, as a whole, recited in the independent claims 1, 8, 17 and 24.

6. Best prior art discussion:

Tozzoli (US Patent 5,717,989) teaches a computer-aided method comprising the steps setting authorizations for international shipment participants to enter, view and approve aspects of data that record conditions and instructions for payment from the importer to the exporter, track progress of the international shipment participants toward meeting the conditions for payment (see at least col.4, line 50-col.10, line 6 & and Figs 1-5. Various participants such as buyers/importers, sellers/exporters, shippers, carriers, insurers, banks, agents, etc. in an international trade transaction are authorized to input and receive/view data through a computer system and approve terms and conditions of the purchase/sale and payment. Participants have to use appropriate passwords to log on to the computerized trade system to input, view and approve data, see col.5, lines 21-34. Buyers and sellers are further approved and authorized to enter the system through an application process, see col.5, lines 46-60. The computerized trade system tracks progress, see col.10, lines 1-6), and allow the importer to electronically approve payment to the exporter by the importer's bank from the credit facility or demand deposit account (see at least col.17, lines 16-25. The computerized trade system allows the seller [exporter in International transactions] to present the data related to Bill of Lading and invoice to

the buyer [buyer in international transaction will be importer] to allow the buyer to approve payment and issue instructions to transfer payment from a financial institution [representing buyer's bank]), receiving agreed conditions and instructions for payment (see at least col.15, line 17-col.16, line 67 [the system receives agreed terms and conditions from the seller and after the shipment the instructions for payment are received] and col. 18, lines 12-15, " producing payment-due data by meansselected terms of the contract have been satisfied.....",), receiving documentation from the exporter or exporter's agent corresponding to fulfillment of the agreed conditions for payment, without need for bank evaluation of the documentation (see at least col.15, lines 22-61), electronically initiating an approval to pay following evaluation by the importer or the importer's agent that the conditions for payment have been fulfilled, modified or waived, the approval to pay corresponding to the instructions for payment (see at least col.15, lines 59-61 and col.17, lines 17-25), and receiving a status update confirming payment of the exporter (see at least col.16, lines 58-67) **but does not teach, as a whole, the following steps:**

mapping fields of documents needed to evidence fulfillment to the data recording the conditions and instructions for payment and establishing synchronization rules for propagation of data among and editing of the mapped fields and applying the synchronization rules to propagate the data to the documents needed to evidence fulfillment using the mapping, wherein the synchronization rules restrict users' ability to override the propagated data

fields once a document preparation state for the agreed conditions and instructions reaches a predetermined level;

(ii) The document A “ Tradecard, Inc.v.S1 Corp., 509F.Supp.2d 304 (S.D.N.Y.2007)” has been reviewed by the examiner and the prior art disclosed is similar to the prior art of Tozzoli, as described above **but does not teach, as a whole, the following steps:**

mapping fields of documents needed to evidence fulfillment to the data recording the conditions and instructions for payment and establishing synchronization rules for propagation of data among and editing of the mapped fields and applying the synchronization rules to propagate the data to the documents needed to evidence fulfillment using the mapping, wherein the synchronization rules restrict users’ ability to override the propagated data fields once a document preparation state for the agreed conditions and instructions reaches a predetermined level;

7. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Art Unit: 3625

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Yogesh C. Garg whose telephone number is 571-272-6756. The examiner can normally be reached on Increased Flex/Hoteling.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey A. Smith can be reached on 571-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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